

September 10, 2010

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Congressman Charlie Melancon (LA-03) issued the following statement in honor of Patriot Day and in remembrance of the victims of the September 11th terrorist attacks.

“As our nation recognizes the somber anniversary of the September 11th terrorist attacks, we also remember that the freedoms we have as Americans come at a cost,” said Rep. Melancon.

“On this day – and every day – we honor those who lost their lives on September 11th, 2001, along with the brave servicemen and women protecting our country from those who wish to do us harm. The United States is a great nation, and a beacon of freedom and hope to oppressed people around the world, because of the sacrifices made by our troops and veterans. We owe them our support, our respect, and our gratitude.”

Congressman Melancon has a strong record in Congress of supporting veterans, servicemembers, and their families. He supported the New GI Bill, passed in 2008, which restored the promise of a full, four-year college education for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans. Congressman Melancon also supported provisions in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (the "Recovery Act") that provided a tax credit for hiring unemployed veterans and helped disabled veterans weather the economic downturn with tax benefits.

Congressman Melancon has consistently voted for veterans and defense funding bills, including the largest increase in Veterans Affairs funding in the agency's history, to ensure that troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan receive the best health care available. Since January 2007, 145 new community-based veterans' outpatient clinics have been opened, thanks to the 70 percent increase in funding for veterans' health care and benefits Congressman Melancon has voted for over the past four years. These investments have also supported hiring over 10,000 new claims processors, 3,389 new doctors and 14,316 new nurses, and opening 92 new veterans' centers to serve over 6 million U.S. veterans.

Congressman Melancon has also supported reform legislation that will guarantee timely and reliable veterans funding, and voted to give U.S. troops a pay raise in both 2008 and 2009.

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